



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

November 16, 2004

Dear Chief Officer:

I am writing to request your participation in the Public Libraries Survey (PLS) for **fiscal year (FY) 2004**, conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), of the U.S. Department of Education, through the Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) for Public Library Data. NCES is authorized to collect these data under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002.

The PLS is administered as a cooperative effort of the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA), the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS), the U.S. Census Bureau, and NCES. The PLS is an annual survey of over 9,000 public libraries in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the outlying areas. The survey requests descriptive information about public libraries, including staffing, revenues, expenditures, circulation, collections, public service hours, and electronic resources. Your participation will increase the availability of these data to interested users in the public and private sectors.

We mailed the FY 2004 PLS to your FSCS State Data Coordinator in mid-November. States have been placed into one of three reporting groups (see table below) based on their fiscal cycles and extraordinary reporting hardship, in order to stagger data submissions and thus enable timelier processing and release of the E.D. Tabs report and data file.

Reporting group and fiscal cycle	States and U.S. territories	Survey due date
Group #1 (July–June)	AK, AZ, CA, CT, DE, GA, HI, IA, KY, MA, MD, MT, NC, NM, NV, OK, OR, RI, SC, TN, VA, WV, WY	April 19, 2005
Group #2 (October–September, January–December)	AL, AR, CO, DC, FL, ID, IL, IN, KS, LA, ME, MI, MN, MO, MS, ND, NE, NH, NY, OH, PA, SD, UT, VT, WA, WI, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands	August 3, 2005
Group #3* (January–December)	NJ, TX	August 31, 2005

*extraordinary reporting hardship

The FY 2004 PLS has a firm due date of April 19, 2005 for group #1 states, August 3, 2005 for group #2 states, and August 31, 2005 for group #3 states. No state data submission will be accepted after the due date specified for the state. Please note: If you cannot submit data for all of your public libraries by the due date, please submit the data you do have available, in lieu of no data submission.

The Francis Keppel Award for timely and accurate submission of data is now based on a point system covering important aspects of the original submission and post-submission processing. States that accumulate at least 25 points out of the maximum 30 points will receive the award. The point system is defined in Attachment C of the letter sent to the State Data Coordinator.

NCES and the Census Bureau, the data collection agent for NCES, will work cooperatively with your data coordinator, who is the contact person for the survey, to ensure the quality and timeliness of data for your state. Census will conduct edit follow-up and send their findings of highly questionable data to the state for review. *Any highly questionable data that are not revised or verified as correct within three weeks of the date of the letter will be deleted and imputed.*

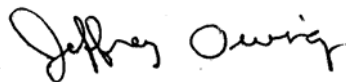
We have enclosed an example of the State Librarian certification form that your coordinator will present to you for signing when your final data are ready for submission, providing you with the opportunity to certify the accuracy of your data submission. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your data submission, please contact Cynthia Ramsey or Laura Hardesty on 1-800-451-6235 or via email at govs.pls@census.gov.

The E.D. Tabs report and the final data file will be available on the NCES web site for public libraries at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/libraries/public.asp>. The data will also be accessible through two web tools on this site: (1) *Compare Public Libraries*, which allows the user to create reports which compare one library of interest to other libraries, and (2) *Search for Public Libraries*, which allows the user to review data for any public library in the nation based on search criteria supplied by the user.

Technical assistance for your state's submission is also available from NCES. If you anticipate needing such assistance, please notify Elaine Kroe, Survey Manager, Elementary/Secondary and Libraries Studies Division (ESLSD), at 202-502-7379, as soon as possible. Jeffrey Williams, Program Director, Library Programs, ESLSD, at 202-502-7476, is also available to answer any other questions you may have regarding the survey.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no person should be asked to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1850-0689. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 45 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this collection of information, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4651.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey Owings".

Jeffrey Owings
Associate Commissioner
Elementary/Secondary and Libraries
Studies Division

Enclosure

State Librarian Certification of Public Library Data, FY 2004

U.S. Department of Education
National Center for Education Statistics

Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS)
for Public Library Data

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the data submitted by the FSCS State Data Coordinator for the Public Libraries Survey, FY 2004 are accurate.

State Name

State Librarian's Name (*Please print*)

State Librarian's Signature

Date

Estimated number of hours State Data Coordinator took to complete the survey:	Hours

Please fax this form toll free to:

PLS Staff @ 866-394-0138